



Think Like A King

A Study of 2 Chronicles 19 & 20 ~ Part 1

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

(Rom. 12:2 NLT-SE)

- **Introduction: Good King Jehoshaphat**

• **Israel's Divided Kingdom**

- **Tribes struggle...** Throughout their history in the Promised Land, the children of Israel struggled with conflict among the tribes. Israel's first king, Saul, was of the tribe of Benjamin. When David from the tribe of Judah was crowned king, the Benjamites rebelled (2 Sam 2 & 3). After a long war, David succeeded in uniting all twelve tribes (2 Sam 5:1-5).
- **Absalom's divisiveness...** When David's son Absalom promoted himself as the new king, he drew many Israelites away from their allegiance to David (2 Sam 15). Significantly, Absalom set up his throne in Hebron, the site of the former capital (v. 10).
- **Jeroboam's rebellion...** David's son Solomon saw more unrest when one of the king's servants Jeroboam, rebelled. When Jeroboam was on assignment for the king when he met the prophet Ahijah, who told him that God was going to give him authority over ten of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- **David's dynasty...** However, God promised that David's dynasty would continue for the sake of God's covenant with David and for the sake of Jerusalem, God's chosen city. Unfortunately, his kingdom would shrink in size.
- **Ten tribes walk away...** When Solomon dies, his son Rehoboam is set to become the next king. Jeroboam returns from Egypt to lead group of people to confront Rehoboam with a demand for a lighter tax burden. Rehoboam refused the demand, ten of the tribes rejected Rehoboam and David's dynasty (1 Kings 12:16) and Ahijah's prophecy was fulfilled.
- **Israel divided...** The northern tribes crowned Jeroboam as their king. Rehoboam made plans to mount an assault on the rebel tribes, but the Lord prevented him from taking that action (vv. 21-24). Meanwhile, Jeroboam institutes a form of calf worship unique to his kingdom and declares that pilgrimages to Jerusalem were unnecessary. As a result, the people of the northern tribes would have no contact with the tribes of Judah and Benjamin.



- **Cause of division...**The northern kingdom is called "Israel" (or sometimes "Ephraim") in Scripture, and the southern kingdom is called "Judah." From God's perspective, the division was a judgment on not keeping His commands prohibiting idolatry. From a human viewpoint, the division was the result of tribal discord and political unrest.
- **God's promised reunification...**In spite of all this, God reveal to the prophet Isaiah that in His mercy He promises to reunite the northern and southern kingdoms. "He will raise a flag among the nations and assemble the exiles of Israel. He will gather the scattered people of Judah from the ends of the earth. Then at last the jealousy between Israel and Judah will end. They will not be rivals anymore." (Is. 11:12-13 NLT-SE)
- **Good King...Bad King**

Kings of Israel

Jeroboam I, rebellious, 931—910 BC
Nadab, bad, 910—909 BC
Baasha, wicked, 909—886 BC
Elah, evil, 886—885 BC
Zimri, sinful, 885 BC
Tibni, immoral, 885—880 BC
Omri, extra bad, 885—874 BC
AHAB, *the worst*, 874—853 BC
Ahaziah, disobedient, 853—852 BC

Joram, mostly rotten, 852—841 BC
Jehu, *not good but better than the rest*, 841—814 BC

Jehoahaz, noncompliant, 814—798 BC
Joash, wayward, 798—782 BC
Jeroboam II, badly behaved, 793—753 BC

Zechariah, abysmal, 753 BC
Shallum, full of vice, 752 BC
Menahem, horrible, 752—742 BC
Pekahiah, idolatrous, 742—740 BC
Pekah, awful, 752—732 BC
Hoshea, appalling, 732—722 BC

Kings of Judah

Rehoboam, mostly bad, 931—913 BC
Abijah, mostly perverted, 913—911 BC
Asa, *good*, 911—870 BC
JEHOSHAPHAT, *righteous*, 873—848 BC
Jehoram, terrible, 853—841 BC
Ahaziah, bad, 841 BC
Athaliah (queen), devilish, 841—835 BC
Joash, *mostly virtuous*, 835—796 BC
Amaziah, *mostly wholesome*, 796—767 BC

Uzziah, *mostly respectable*, 790—739 BC
Jotham, *worthy*, 750—731 BC

Ahaz, heinous, 735—715 BC
Hezekiah, *the best*, 715—686 BC
Manasseh, depraved until he repented at the end, 695—642 BC
Amon, treacherous, 642—640 BC
Josiah, *great*, 640—609 BC
Jehoahaz, dreadful, 609 BC
Jehoiakim, degenerate, 609—597 BC
Jehoiachin, frightful, 597 BC
Zedekiah, foolish, 597—586 BC

• **Who is King Jehoshaphat?**

- King Jehoshaphat was the fourth king of Judah under the divided monarchy, the son of Asa. We are first introduced to him in 1 Kings 15:24 but are told nothing more than that he succeeded Asa. First Kings 22 gives a brief account of his reign with 2 Chronicles 17–22 giving a more comprehensive account.
- **Spiritually...**Jehoshaphat began his reign in a positive way. Second Chronicles 17:3–6 gives this commendation: ³ The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the example of his father's early years and did not worship the images of Baal. ⁴ He sought his father's God and obeyed his commands instead of following the evil practices of the kingdom of Israel. ⁵ So the LORD established Jehoshaphat's control over the kingdom of Judah. All the people of Judah brought gifts to Jehoshaphat, so he became very wealthy and highly esteemed. ⁶ He was deeply committed to the ways of the LORD. He removed the pagan shrines and Asherah poles from Judah. (2 Chr. 17:3–6 NLT-SE)
- **Militarily...**Jehoshaphat fortified his defenses, primarily against the northern kingdom of Israel (2 Chronicles 17:1–3). The surrounding nations feared Judah and brought tribute (2 Chronicles 17:10–19).
- **After making peace with Israel...**Jehoshaphat apparently tried to reach out to Ahab, the king of Israel. Ahab was one of the wickedest kings of Israel, and Jehoshaphat could not have been ignorant of his character. First Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 18 relate the following account: Ahab asks Jehoshaphat to help him attack Syria. Jehoshaphat wisely requests that they consult the LORD on the matter. Ahab gathers 400 of his prophets who encourage the attack. Jehoshaphat recognizes that these are not genuine prophets of the LORD, and the exchange that follows between Jehoshaphat and Ahab is almost comical: Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there not also a prophet of the LORD here? We should ask him the same question." The king of Israel answered Jehoshaphat, "There is one more man who could consult the LORD for us, but I hate him. He never prophesies anything but trouble for me! His name is Micaiah."
- **The Lord's Prophet...**So, Micaiah is summoned, and the question is posed. "Micaiah replied sarcastically, 'Yes, go up and be victorious, for you will have victory over them!'" This answer exasperates King Ahab: "'How many times must I demand that you speak only the truth to me when you speak for the LORD?'" Micaiah then tells Ahab the hard truth: "In a vision I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep without a shepherd. And the LORD said, 'Their master has been killed. Send them home in peace.'"
- **A Near-Fatal Error...**In spite of what seems to be an acknowledgement that Micaiah speaks for the LORD, Jehoshaphat joins Ahab in the attack. Ahab is killed, and Jehoshaphat narrowly escapes. When Jehoshaphat returns home, he is reprimanded by a prophet of the Lord for his collaboration with Ahab: "Jehu the seer, the son of Hanani, went out to meet him and said to the king, 'Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the Lord? Because of this, the wrath of the Lord is on you. There is, however, some good in you, for you have rid the land of the Asherah poles and have set your heart on seeking God'" (2 Chronicles 19:2–3).

King Jehoshaphat's Story in 2 Chronicles 20

In this study we will look at a portion of the life of **Jehoshaphat**, King of Judah, and look for principles to emerge that will help us **Think Like A King**. The sections of scripture we'll be looking at are:

The Reformer ~ 2 Chr. 19:4,8
The Man of God ~ 2 Chr. 20:1–12
The Prophetic Leader ~ 2 Chr. 20:13–17
The Man of Faith ~ 2 Chr. 20:20–24
The Finisher ~ 2 Chr. 20:29–33

- **The Reformer...***Someone who puts significant effort into positive change.*

- Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem, but he went out among the people, traveling from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim, encouraging the people to return to the LORD, the God of their ancestors...In Jerusalem, Jehoshaphat appointed some of the Levites and priests and clan leaders in Israel to serve as judges for cases involving the LORD's regulations and for civil disputes. (2 Chr. 19:4, 8 NLT-SE)

The reformation of society and restoration of spirituality should be our goal as Christians.

- *"He went out among the people...encouraging the people to return to the LORD"...*Jehoshaphat was a king of the people and for the people. He didn't wait for them to come to him, but showed his love for the people God gave him encouraging them to return to their God. **Good kings walk with people.** (Rev. 2:4-5)
- *"Jehoshaphat appointed some of the Levites and priests and clan leaders in Israel to serve as judges"...*Social justice is not just a contemporary millennial fixation. There is a reason the Lord is highlighting it right now. He doesn't want us to change hearts, but change the culture as well. **Kings thrive on justice.** (Rom. 12:2)

- **The Man of God...***A person who endeavors to demonstrate the character of God on behalf of man.*

- After this, the armies of the Moabites, Ammonites, and some of the Meunites declared war on Jehoshaphat. Messengers came and told Jehoshaphat, "A vast army from Edom is marching against you from beyond the Dead Sea. They are already at Hazazon-tamar." (This was another name for En-gedi.)...
- *"A vast army is marching against you"...*The bigger the battle, the greater the lean. A vast army deserves a God who is the master of the impossible. **Kings are not intimidated by impossibilities, but make room for them.** (Matt 19:26)
- *"They are already at Hazazon-tamar." (En-Gedi)...*The enemy was close, not more than a day's march, just over the hill. When your foe seems to be breathing down your neck, that's not the time to make a plan. Strategies are bulky and complicated. **Godly kings listen for wisdom that comes from outside themselves.** (Luke 8:18)
- ...Jehoshaphat was terrified by this news and begged the LORD for guidance. He also ordered everyone in Judah to begin fasting. So people from all the towns of Judah came to Jerusalem to seek the LORD's help....
- *"Jehoshaphat was terrified by this news and begged the LORD for guidance"...*This is some serious seeking the king is doing! Terrified and begging are not the response of a cocky leader. God is not offended by our apparent need for him. **Good kings are not void of emotion, but are stirred by it toward goodness.** (James 4:10)
- *He "ordered everyone in Judah to begin fasting"...*Jehoshaphat was honest, but focused. He knew his heart and the heart's of the people needed to be in perfect alignment with God's heart. The reason we fast is not to convince God to move on our behalves, but to convince our hearts to yield to his will. **Kings make alignment with God a priority.** (Matt 26:39)
- ...Jehoshaphat stood before the community of Judah and Jerusalem in front of the new courtyard at the Temple of the LORD. He prayed, "O LORD, God of our ancestors, you alone are the God who is in heaven. You are ruler of all the kingdoms of the earth. You are powerful and mighty; no one can stand against you! O our God, did you not drive out those who lived in this land when your people Israel arrived? And did

you not give this land forever to the descendants of your friend Abraham? Your people settled here and built this Temple to honor your name. They said, 'Whenever we are faced with any calamity such as war, plague, or famine, we can come to stand in your presence before this Temple where your name is honored. We can cry out to you to save us, and you will hear us and rescue us.'...

- "*Jehoshaphat stood before the community of Judah and Jerusalem*" and prayed to God...Now that he and the nation of Judah had made moves to align their hearts with fasting, without hesitation the king moves into his position of influence with the people. He stands before them, not to make excuses, but to point them to their God. **Kings know the value of position for influence.** (Ps. 78:5-7)
- "*Whenever we are faced with any calamity such as war, plague, or famine, we can come to stand in your presence before this Temple where your name is honored. We can cry out to you to save us, and you will hear us and rescue us*"...What a prayer! Jehoshaphat didn't just position himself before the people, but in the presence of God as well. His presence is a place of revelation, power and grace. Our eyes are opened in His presence and we see clearly who and what we need to overcome. **Kings pray big prayers and expect big results.** (John 14:16-17)
- ...*"And now see what the armies of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir are doing. You would not let our ancestors invade those nations when Israel left Egypt, so they went around them and did not destroy them. Now see how they reward us! For they have come to throw us out of your land, which you gave us as an inheritance. O our God, won't you stop them? We are powerless against this mighty army that is about to attack us. We do not know what to do, but we are looking to you for help."* (2 Chr. 20:1-12 NLT-SE)
- "*You would not let our ancestors invade those nations when Israel left Egypt, so they went around them and did not destroy them*"...Trying to outguess God is an exercise in futility. His timing is perfect, as is His love. Every time we see the hand of God move on our behalf, our faith is stirred and trust grows. That said, there's always "more to come" when it comes to the Lord's plans. **Kings are not bound to the past, but empowered by it.** (Job 42:1-2)
- "*We are powerless against this mighty army*"...Admitting you are powerless is not the same as admitting you are weak. The focus on weakness is you. When we confess powerlessness, it is an invitation for the God of Power to come and fill us. **Kings are not afraid to confront their one weakness.** (Eph. 3:20)
 - "The Christian thinks his weaknesses are his greatest hindrance in the life and service of God; God tells us that it is the secret of strength and success. It is our weakness, heartily accepted and continually realized, that gives our claim and access to the strength of Him who has said, 'My strength is made perfect in weakness.'" ~ **Andrew Murray, Abide in Christ: The Joy of Being in God's Presence**
- "*We do not know what to do, but we are looking to you for help*"...A wise man is aware of his limits. King Jehoshaphat stood before the people of his nation and admitted that he didn't know what to do. That was his choice. Would you choose to make this admission to the people you have influence over? The king was focusing the people's attention on God and not the enemy at their doorstep. **Kings are always aware of where their strength comes from.** (2 Tim. 4:18)
- **The Prophetic Leader...***The leader whose ear is bent toward God and heart advocates for man.*

- As all the men of Judah stood before the LORD with their little ones, wives, and children, the Spirit of the LORD came upon one of the men standing there. His name was Jahaziel son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite who was a descendant of Asaph...
 - *“All the men of Judah stood before the LORD with their little ones, wives, and children”*...Do your children know of God’s faithfulness because they have heard about it from you, or have they seen it for themselves? Families are strengthened by what they experience together, good and bad. **Kings don’t divide families, but see the strength and hope that come from families that walk together with intention.** (Deut. 6:5-7)
 - *“The Spirit of the LORD came upon one of the men standing there. His name was Jahaziel.”*...This is amazing! So much of prophecy is relegated to “the prophets.” Not so here. God picks a man “standing there.” *Anyone* can be used by god to communicate His heart. **Kings want to hear from God, no matter the source.** (Acts 10:34)
- ...He said, “Listen, all you people of Judah and Jerusalem! Listen, King Jehoshaphat! This is what the LORD says: Do not be afraid! Don’t be discouraged by this mighty army, for the battle is not yours, but God’s. Tomorrow, march out against them. You will find them coming up through the ascent of Ziz at the end of the valley that opens into the wilderness of Jeruel. But you will not even need to fight. Take your positions; then stand still and watch the LORD’s victory. He is with you, O people of Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid or discouraged. Go out against them tomorrow, for the LORD is with you!” (2 Chr. 20:13–17 NLT-SE)
 - *“This is what the LORD says: Do not be afraid! Don’t be discouraged by this mighty army, for the battle is not yours, but God’s.”*...Not only does the word of God come through a common man, but the word he delivers is remarkable! There is an impending battle and it will be fought, not by the armed nation of Judah, but by the God of the Universe! So, what does it mean? Do we not go into battle? **Kings look at the big picture.** (Is. 14)
 - *“Tomorrow, march out against them”*...Wait, we’re marching into battle, but the Lord will do the fighting? It shows that god wants to not just fight for us, but with us. **Kings don’t shrink back from trials, but display faith and trust through them.** (Matt. 26:45)
 - *“But you will not even need to fight”*...“So, we’re marching into battle, but not fighting the battle?” This is so interesting. Jesus wants us to show up. It’s important that we show up, especially when He has promised to fight on our behalf. 90% of Christianity is showing up! **Kings show up for the sake of the kingdom.** (1 John 4:19)
 - *“Take your positions; then stand still and watch the LORD’s victory”*...This seems counterintuitive. It also seems like the Lord wants his people to have a front row seat to the battle, not be enjoying it from the cheap seats. Move into position and pay attention to what the Lord is doing right in front of you. **Kings don’t stay at home when the battle is on.** (Ps. 46:10)
 - *“Do not be afraid or discouraged”* (second time!)...When God repeats Himself, it’s time to really pay attention. Admittedly, marching into battle severely outnumbered with a promise that you wouldn’t even have to fight the battle to win might just cause a bit of consternation, even to a king. God repeats it because it’s a distant possibility fear and discouragement are about to manifest. The king heard what the Lord said and the proof is what happens the next morning. **Kings move through difficulties, not around them.** (Is. 50:4)
- **The Man of Faith...***The person who trusts God more than himself.*

- Early the next morning the army of Judah went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. On the way Jehoshaphat stopped and said, “Listen to me, all you people of Judah and Jerusalem! Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be able to stand firm. Believe in his prophets, and you will succeed.”...
 - “*On the way*”...Following the leading of the Holy Spirit is a moment-by-moment journey. It appears that Jehoshaphat’s faith is increasing with every step he takes towards the enemy army. He seems to be sensing the waning faith of his followers and pauses along the way to encourage them. His eye are not just upon himself and his own future, but again showing great compassion for his people. **Kings are pay attention.** (1 Pet. 5:2)
 - “*Believe in the LORD your God, and you will be able to stand firm*”...The ability to stand firm is not based upon courage, but faith. We stand firm because we have confidence on the person we believe in...Jesus. The stronger our faith in Him, the greater our ability to stand in the midst of trials. **Kings stand firm.** (Eph. 6:13)
 - “*Believe in his prophets, and you will succeed*”...Why mention the prophets here? It’s not about the prophets, but who the prophets are speaking for. Hearing and understanding the voice of God was essential for victory. the king knew they were not going to win without unwavering obedience. **Kings never plan for defeat.** (2 John 1:6)
- ...After consulting the people, the king appointed singers to walk ahead of the army, singing to the LORD and praising him for his holy splendor. This is what they sang: “Give thanks to the LORD; his faithful love endures forever!”...
 - “*After consulting the people*”...What did Jehoshaphat consult the people about? We don’t know. All we know is that after consulting the people, the king makes the decision to put the singers in front of the army as they approach their enemy. There is kingly wisdom being employed here that we are only getting a glimpse of from a distance. **Kings know the value of the wisdom that comes from their close friends.** (Prov. 19:20-21)
 - “*The king appointed singers to walk ahead of the army*”...Worship is warfare. In this case, worship is significant battle strategy that the king is tapping into. He appoints singers and places them, not symbolically, but strategically. Unbeknownst to them, this “worship team” and their song will become the primary assault weapon to be used to destroy the enemy. **Kings are creative.** (Ps. 99:1, 5)
 - “*Give thanks to the LORD; his faithful love endures forever!*”...The singers begin to thank God even before the battle begins. Or, *this* the battle? God promises to fight for them. their response to His promise is praise, which becomes the weapon God uses to defeat the enemy. They didn’t sing against the enemy. They sang to their Lord! **Kings know what’s in their arsenal.** (Ps. 118:28)
- ...At the very moment they began to sing and give praise, the LORD caused the armies of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir to start fighting among themselves. The armies of Moab and Ammon turned against their allies from Mount Seir and killed every one of them. After they had destroyed the army of Seir, they began attacking each other. So when the army of Judah arrived at the lookout point in the wilderness, all they saw were dead bodies lying on the ground as far as they could see. Not a single one of the enemy had escaped. (2 Chr. 20:20–24 NLT-SE)
 - “*At the very moment they began to sing and give praise, the LORD caused the armies...to start fighting among themselves*”...The Lord caused the armies to fight against each other. A song of thankfulness coming from a people who are leaning heavily upon the strength of God to fight for them...this is a recipe for success. **Kings know where their strength is found.** (Acts 16:22-24)

- *"The armies of Moab and Ammon turned against their allies from Mount Seir and killed every one of them"...* God knows more about the weakness of our enemies than we ever could. In the midst of your personal battle, remember that Jesus not only has your back, but he knows the weakness of your enemy and He will use that weakness to fight on your behalf. **Kings know the weakness of their enemy.** (Is. 58:8-9)
- *"They began attacking each other"...* Our assumption many times is that the Devil is smarter than we are and because of that, he has an advantage over us. This could be no further from the truth. The Spirit of God in us gives us access to wisdom that confuses and confounds the enemy of our souls. **Kings know wisdom when they see.** (Acts 6:9-10)
- *"Not a single one of the enemy had escaped"...* How effective is *your* ministry? God in us and working through us can accomplish much more than we ever imagine. Not everything is a process. There are times when God accomplished 100% of what he is after "in the twinkling of an eye." **Kings anticipate 100% victory.** (Eph 3:20)
- **The Finisher...** *The leader who sees his legacy as an investment and not a measurement of success.*
- When all the surrounding kingdoms heard that the LORD himself had fought against the enemies of Israel, the fear of God came over them. So Jehoshaphat's kingdom was at peace, for his God had given him rest on every side...
 - *"When all the surrounding kingdoms heard that the LORD himself had fought against the enemies of Israel, the fear of God came over them"...* **Kings don't apologize for victories.** They don't minimize accomplishments. They are honest about what God does in and through them. God's reputation goes before Him and shifts atmospheres. We walk in that kind of presence. (Ps. 19:7-11)
 - *"Jehoshaphat's kingdom was at peace, for his God had given him rest"...* There is nothing like the rest that God gives. We tend to fight rest because we think it's an unproductive use of time. Kings know that rest offers an opportunity for restoration. **For kings, rest is an offensive weapon.** (1 Pet. 5:10)
- ...So Jehoshaphat ruled over the land of Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem twenty-five years. His mother was Azubah, the daughter of Shilhi. Jehoshaphat was a good king, following the ways of his father, Asa. He did what was pleasing in the LORD's sight. During his reign, however, he failed to remove all the pagan shrines, and the people never fully committed themselves to follow the God of their ancestors. (2 Chr. 20:29-33 NLT-SE)
 - *"Jehoshaphat was a good king"...* What makes us good? **Kings are good**, not because of the expansiveness, resources and influence of their kingdom, but because they honor their creator and share his values: compassion, kindness, generosity, and the willingness to care for the needs of his people. Jesus was the perfect model of a good King, yet when people point to His goodness, His immediate response is to defer to the Father. That's good! (Luke 18:19)
 - *"He failed to remove all the pagan shrines, and the people never fully committed themselves to follow the God of their ancestors"...* Jehoshaphat was good, but not perfect. This should give us hope. We can be forgiven for the places where we fall short. We can be revived and restored. We have a hope and a future in God. **This is the way a king thinks.** (Rom. 12:2)